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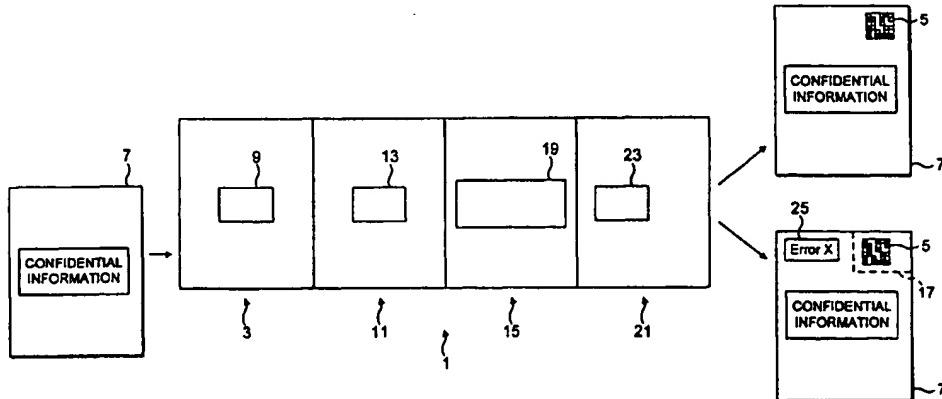
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(54) Title: ITEM HANDLING SYSTEM AND METHOD



(57) Abstract: An item handling system for and method of handling items in an item stream, the system comprising: a validation unit for validating an element containing an authentication code on each item in an item stream, wherein an item is assigned as being spoiled where the element does not satisfy at least one validation criterion; and a sorting unit for separating spoiled items from the item stream.

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## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No  
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According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

## B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)  
IPC 7 G07B B07C

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the International search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

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## C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category °	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 5 898 153 A (LAGAN THOMAS A ET AL) 27 April 1999 (1999-04-27)	1-7, 48-54, 94, 95, 99-104, 106, 108
A	column 3, line 44 -column 4, line 5	8-47, 55-93, 96-98, 105, 107, 109
	column 5, line 60 -column 6, line 4	
X	GB 2 174 039 A (PITNEY BOWES) 29 October 1986 (1986-10-29) page 2, line 103 -page 3, line 125; figures 2-4	1-10, 48-57
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 Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C. Patent family members are listed in annex.

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## C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

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X	US 5 495 981 A (WARTHER RICHARD O) 5 March 1996 (1996-03-05) abstract; figures column 6, line 18 – line 26 -----	104-109
A	US 2002/087493 A1 (HERBERT RAYMOND JOHN) 4 July 2002 (2002-07-04) paragraph '0002!; figures 3-5 -----	101-103
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Information on patent family members

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